(b) if so, whether it is possible to make ESI cards for lakhs of employees within 15 days;

(c) whether it is also a fact that most of the identity card making computerized machines of the corporation are out of order;

(d) if so, whether any responsibility has been fixed in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) The ordinary Identity Cards issued to ESI beneficiaries are also honoured. The machines are working properly and the ESI Corporation is also taking the help of Private Agencies for preparation of Identity Cards. The Corporation has also issued instructions not to deny benefits for want of Photo Identity Cards.

Schemes/Programmes for labour

2297. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various schemes/programmes announced by Government during the last six months;

(b) the manner in which these schemes/programmes are likely to benefit the labour class especially unskilled labourers;

(c) whether any target has been set under these schemes/ programmes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (d) The Central Board of Trustees (EPF), which is a tripartite body, at its 158th meeting held on 22.10.2002 has, in principle, approved launching a housing scheme for EPF subscribers. A committee has been constituted consisting of representatives of employers, employees and senior officials of Employees Provident Fund Organisation under the Chairmanship of

Shri S. Gopalan, former Union Labour Secretary. The Committee is studying the feasibility aspects of the implementation of the Scheme. Since it is not an obligatory activity of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, interministerial consultation and consultation with the social partners is required. In such circumstances, it is not possible to indicate the precise time-frame for implementation of the scheme though efforts are being made to launch the scheme at the earliest.

Beedi workers in A.P.

2298. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are more than seven lakh beedi workers in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether Government have extended any welfare schemes for such workers particularly in the fields of housing and social security; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) There are about 44 lakh beedi workers in the country, out of which 6.25 lakh beedi workers are in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The Government is running a number of welfare schemes for the welfare of beedi workers in the fields of health, social security, housing, education and recreation throughout the country including Andhra Pradesh. Under the Integrated Housing Scheme for beedi workers, financial assistance of Rs. 20,000/- per unit is given to the worker as subsidy. Under Group Insurance Scheme for beedi workers claim amount is Rs. 10,000/- for natural death, Rs. 25,000/- in case of accidental death/permanent disability due to an accident and Rs. 12,500/- on partial permanent disability due to an accident. The workers are entitled for free treatment in dispensaries/hospitals run by Labour Welfare Organization. In major diseases like cancer, heart diseases, kidney transplantation, the workers are reimbursed the amount incurred on treatment on these